DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 022 145 AL 001 251

By-Rodgers, Marie Diane
THE FRENCH HERITAGE IN ACADIANA: THE FUNDAMENTAL COURSE OF ACTION NECESSARY TO PRESERVE THE FRENCH LANGUAGE.
Pub Date May 68
Note-35p.
EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.48
Descriptors-AMERICAN HISTORY, *BILINGUAL EDUCATION, CULTURAL BACKGROUND, CULTURA L FACTORS, CULTURAL INTERRELATIONSHIPS, ETHNIC GROUPS, *FRENCH, LANGUAGE ROLE, OFFICIAL LANGUAGES
Identifiers-*Acadia, Cajuns

Many actions have been taken recently to bring about a revival of the French language in Acadiana (Acadia), a "triangulated area, delimited by, but not including, the cities of Lake Charles, Alexandria, and New Orleans." Historically, the Acadians "spoke exclusively and happily their native French language," but they became assimilated into the local culture. One estimate of the declining number of these French-speaking Americans today is only 400,000. In addition to the factor of assimilation, the decline in the number of speakers is due, the author feels, to limitations in the teaching of French in the schools, the social attitudes prevalent, and the impact of English mass media. The author outlines the history of these people and points out the commercial and cultural advantages of preserving their language and cultural heritage. A bibliography of approximately 50 books, newspaper articles, and other publications concerning Acadia concludes this paper. See related document AL 001 250. (AMM)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

THE FRENCH HERITAGE IN ACADIANA: THE FUNDAMENTAL COURSE OF ACTION NECESSARY TO PRESERVE THE FRENCH LANGUAGE.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY Marie Diane Rodgers
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER."

NOT PUBLISHED
COPY RIGHT RESERVED

ED022145

Marie Diane Rodgers
Box 1616
USL
LAFAYETTE LA

MAY 1968

AL 001 251

Summary

I. In recent months, many actions have been taken to bring about a revival of the French language in Acadiana:
   A. Much history has been written on the Acadians and much praise has been given for the "miracle" of their survival.
   B. Action is now necessary to lessen the inroads made by an ever-growing anglophone mass culture.
   C. A general statement of the problem is outlined.

II. In Acadiana, the French language spoken since the founding of Louisiana has been declining under many influences:
   A. Historically the Acadians spoke exclusively and happily their native French language, but they soon saw themselves assimilated:
      1. Because the Acadians settled in remote areas, they spoke French exclusively and happily.
      2. Gabriel-Louis Jaray suggests that unlike the French in Canada they enjoyed religious and civil liberties, did not resist the American influence, and were assimilated.
   B. Although on the decline both quantitatively and qualitatively, the French language spoken in Acadiana is a living language:
      1. Acadiana is populated by French people living in a triangulated area, delimited by, but not including, the cities of Lake Charles, Alexandria and New Orleans.
      2. Approximately 400,000 Acadians speak French daily.
      3. French is still an official language of Louisiana.
   C. Many factors led to the decline of the French language in Acadiana:
      1. There has been limited teaching of the French language in the school of Acadiana.
      2. Social attitudes have greatly added to the decline of French in Acadiana:
         a. Broadcasting has given an unrealistic view of the Acadian life.
         b. The young people have adopted the mass American culture rather than their parents'.
      3. The impact of English mass-media has contributed mostly to the decline of the French language in Acadiana.
   D. The survival of French in Acadiana is in the domestic and international interest of the U.S.:
      1. Acadiana could look French and attract tourists from the French-speaking world who want to feel at home and tourists from other places who want to see something different.
      2. Job opportunities abound for people with special language abilities in the foreign service, education and the armed forces.

III. Proposals for the preservation of the French heritage (which includes the language) in Acadiana have been made, and many have been put in action:
   A. In the past the France-Amerique group has done all it could to preserve the French heritage of Acadiana.
   B. A cultural agreement with the province of Quebec should be signed.
      1. A similar agreement was suggested by G. L. Jaray in 1937.
      2. After thirty years, it is now in Congress for approval.
      3. This agreement would encourage exchanges between agencies and institutions of both States.

C. Early French education is needed but constitutes a long-term investment:

1. Such a program would require the formation of new teachers (Institute).
2. Education in French should start in the first grade of grammar school.
3. French Canadian text books, geared to North American concepts should be used.

D. The "look French" aspect of the program should be emphasized to attract tourists:
1. Stores, restaurants, hotels and other public buildings should have French names, menus and decor.
2. Historical buildings and cities should be restored.

IV. The most important immediate course of action to preserve the French language is daily broadcasting in French:

A. The impact of English mass-media has contributed to the decline of the French language in Acadiana and still does:
1. Three observers mentioned the impact of the electronic media as a "killer."
2. Materials at low cost could be secured from French Canada to rectify this.

B. The same media which anglicized the Acadians could now logically help revive the French language in Acadiana:
1. New Brunswick, Canada, which now has French television and radio stations serves as an example.
2. The Acadians must go on speaking their language with the help of the mass-media so that long-term programs may have a solid foundation.

THE FRENCH HERITAGE IN ACADIANA: THE FUNDAMENTAL COURSE OF ACTION NECESSARY TO PRESERVE THE FRENCH LANGUAGE

During World War Two, an old citizen of Abbeville, Louisiana, heard that many Frenchmen had died and that France had capitulated to the Vichy government. He is reputed to have commented: "That'll teach them a lesson; they should have stayed home, right here in Louisiana."

That was twenty-five years ago! Today, some Acadian pride, some ethnic feelings are left -- but less and less. Much has been written about the history of the Acadians, including many flattering books and articles noting how they have managed to survive the American melting pot. But a few generations may be all it will take to place the beautiful French flavor of Southwest Louisiana as merely part of history. In recent months however, various actions have been taken. And with widespread interest and support -- even that of North Louisiana -- the dying fire could become a steady flame. The fight is now or never for linguistic survival against anglophone mass culture.

I will discuss in this paper the causes for the decline of the French language and the reasons why it should be kept alive -- apart from my personal feelings, as a French Canadian and thus a French speaking North American. I will then enumerate the proposals suggested by various people and the actions taken to

attempt a rennaissance. It will then be evident that daily broadcasting in French is the fundamental short-term course of action necessary to preserve it, the living language, supplemented, for the long-term effect, by increased language instruction in school.

In the past it was fairly easy for the Acadian to keep his language alive. Hilda Kilmer Dubois tells us that historically "They [the Acadians] found the city and most of the surrounding area already taken. This left the bayou regions for the Acadian. That is where he settled, behind a barricade of swamp and distance, to recreate his life as it was in Nova-Scotia."[1] A simple life as fisherman or farmer, with relatively little contact with the outside world was all the Cajun[2] knew and all he wanted to be happy.

Gabriel-Louis Jaray has suggested that in Louisiana the Acadians enjoyed religious and civil liberties and did not realize they were being absorbed by the dominant American element. By contrast, the French Canadian and the Acadians of Canada developed a tradition of resistance against overt attempts to anglisise them and thus developed the will to preserve their language,

---

[1]Hilda Kilmer Dubois, "Acadian People Ara Phenomenal Group," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Sunday Advertiser (February 18, 1968), p. 21.

[2]This term is commonly supposed to have originally been "Arcadien", then "Acadien", then "Cadien". Others speculate that it could be a corruption of "Canadien", which became again "Cadien". The American began to use the easier style: Cajun. It has born derogatory undertones in the past. This is no longer true.

religion and culture. In Canada, the Irish believed that the assimilation of French Canadians and Acadians would strengthen the Catholic religion. Time showed, however, that often the anglisised Franco-Canadian became protestant. The Irish bowed to the fact and the French Canadians, gathered into their own parishes (territory under the spiritual jurisdiction of a vicar), fought the Anglo-Saxon influence.[3]

Jaray's analysis ignores the difference between the linguistic climate of Canada and the United States. Despite anglophone[4] prejudice, the constitutional law of Canada has, since the Quebec Act of 1774, always contained some measure of guarantee for the French language. The U. S. Constitution makes no mention of language, but the dominance of English is assumed. Since the Louisiana Purchase, the Acadians of Louisiana have lived in a national culture which assumes the atrophy of linguistic minorities. So, with the intrusion of "American" life, the French heritage, which the Acadian used to be proud of, is paridly declining. "The Cajun's history is a legend of sadness, loneliness and terror. His birthright has been bewilderment. His quaint customs and beliefs have never been fully understood nor appreciated. It is

---

[3]Gabriel-Louis Jaray, "Le destin francais en Louisiane, Nouvelle-Orléans et Acadie louisianaise," France-Amérique, Paris, Siege social (August, 1937), pp. 153-158.

[4]A neologism meaning: one who understands and speaks a language, in this case English.

therefore sad to note that -- like a winter violet which quietly bows its head to die--the old time Cajun is slowly disappearing."[5]

Without any doubt, the Cajun "is becoming replaced, diluted, difused by his own kith and kin."[6] But he has not died completely yet. As Raymond S. Rodgers notes,

> ...there are French-speaking persons ranging along the coast of Louisiana from the Sabine River to the rural outskirts of New Orleans (Raceland). Inland, French may be found in varying degree as far North as the Alexandria region. The cities of New Orleans, Baton Rouge and Lake Charles, however, represent points of assimilation where French becomes almost totally obliterated by the English language.[7]

Acadiana, the triangular area outlined on our map[8], "is a term frequently used to identify the bilingual parishes (counties) of South, particularly South-Central, Louisiana. The term 'Acadiana' reflects the numerically dominant position, within the 'French' population, of the Acadians."[9] These French people of Louisiana came directly from France and through Canada and the Caribbean.

---

[5]Hilda Kilmer Dubois, "Cajun Title Growing in Stature, Understanding," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Sunday Advertiser (February 11, 1968), p. 12.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Raymond S. Rodgers, "Political Economy of the Survival of French in Louisiana," paper read to the Louisiana Academy of Sciences (April, 1967), p. 3.

[8]See map in Appendix A, taken from Rodgers, "Political Economy".

[9]Rodgers, "Political Economy", p. 1.

They also gave the French language and elements of French culture to the negro and mulatto population.[10]

Acadiana is then the area where "French is a living language, because it has survived in Louisiana for 300 years and is still being spoken in many quarters."[11] But by how many Acadians? Bona Arsenault estimates the number of Acadians to be some 800,000.[12] On the other hand, Robert M. Crisler, professor of Geography at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, estimates the number of persons of French white antecedents to be 525,000 /A more skeptical figure than that of Bona Arsenault. These persons do not necessarily speak French now._7.[13] Thomas D. Arceneaux, dean of Agriculture at U.S.L., says that about 400,000 persons speak French daily. This, I think, probably includes the Negroes, since they have a place in the "French" culture. As slaves, they came to Southwest Louisiana with their French masters, from Saint-Domingue and other places. Others were brought

---

[10]James Domengeaux, "Speech to the Louisiana Association of Fairs and Festivals," Baton Rouge, Louisiana (February 10, 1968).

[11]Hosea Phillips, professor of French, as quoted by Bob Angers, Jr., "Anecdotes and Antidotes," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (February 19, 1967), p. 6.

[12]History of the Acadians (Quebec: Le conseil de la vie francaise, 1955) as quoted by Rodgers, "Political Economy," footnote Appendix, p. 1. There is no page given for History.

[13]Robert M. Crisler, as quoted by Rodgers, "Political Economy," footnote Appendix, p. 1.

directly from Africa, and rapidly adopted the French negro "patois".[14]

All should speak it proudly, since French is still an official language of Louisiana. According to a study by Rodgers

> The Louisiana Purchase stipulated that all rights under the French regime, including customary use of the French language as an official language, would continue--until such time as Congress were to provide otherwise. Congress has never revoked the official status of French in Louisiana. The act admitting Louisiana to statehood gave the state implied powers to legislate in matters of language.[15]

The Louisiana Constitution does not unduly discourage the use of French as an official language. Along with regulations for legal advertisments, which must be in English, there are few stipulations prejedicial to continued use of French on the state level.[16]

But the use of the French language is declining in Acadiana and many factors have contributed to it. One of them is the deplorable lack of teaching of and in the French language. It was, as a matter of many school boards policy, as early as 1868, prohibited to speak French on the school grounds. The

---

[14]Vincent Prince, "Les Acadiens en Louisiane," Montréal: LaPresse (February 14, 1966), p. 7. Arceneaux quoted by Prince. (It is very difficult to give accurate figures in the absence of a census question on this topic.)

[15]Rodgers, "The Legal Status of the French Language in Louisiana," Eunice, Louisiana: Eunice News (December 5, 1967), p. 5.

[16]Ibid.

idea was to make this illiterate people literate in one language. Hilda K. Dubois sums up why: "To learn to do things in a new and better way, to become more educated, to replace the old beliefs and customs with new ones, to speak without a trace of accent..."[17] That was progress! So the idea lingered on, despite the many examples of bilingual countries, such as Canada, Switzerland and Belgium, where many people are literate in two or more languages. From figures given by Audrey Babineaux, Superintendant of Foreign Languages, Louisiana State Department of Education, "Le budget de l'education pour 1968 est de $637,000,000; en 1969, on ajoutera $100,000,000. On dépense actuellement moins de $5,000 pour [la promotion de] l'enseignement du francais."[18]

In French Canada, the young people have rebeled and protested against the older generation, but, by contrast, they demanded the purification of their language. Such movements as the Bon Parler (in newspaper columns and TV and radio programs.), singing, dance and folklore groups, and the new singer-composers, have sprung up. Here "In Acadiana today, being 'French' means being oldfashioned, rural, unsophisticated and uneducated. The young have little concept of French as a dynamic and vibrant

---

[17]Dubois, "Cajun Title".

[18]As quoted by Léon J. Z. Patenaude, "Raport du secrétaire administratif de S.E.C.M.S. de la délégation des éditeurs de manuels scolaires en Louisiane, U.S.A. du 15 au 18 février, 1968," Montréal (February 19, 1968).

culture--popular as well as highbrow. They rebel from the old generation by joining the prevailing North American English teen-culture."[19] These social attitudes plus those reflected in films and broadcasting have greatly influenced the decline. Paul C. Tate, in a Memorandum to N.B.C., deplores the phonyness, which he discusses at length under various headings, of a film on Acadian life. This was a fais-do-do, staged outdoors (they traditionally were always held indoors), with people dressed as aristocrats, etc...[20] He goes further to the heart of the problem when he states:

> More importante, however, is the effect of your film on honest-to-goodness South Louisiana Acadian descendants, who are responsible for the preservation of the wonderful fais-do-do and many other cultural traits of their ancestors. Their dignity and self-respect have been repeatedly insulted by this type of exploitation ever since the rest of the world began to find the Cajun "colorful"...Because their way of life is seldom honestly presented, they tend to assume that what is chosen for publication is what is acceptable to others, and they grow ashamed --yes ashamed--of what they really are, and what is truly theirs --their cultural heritage.[21]

Rodgers asserts also that broadcasting not only misrepresents the Cajuns but has contributed mostly to the decline

---

[19]Rodgers, "Political Economy," p. 6.

[20]Paul C. Tate, "Memorandum in Support of Demand That Louisiana Portion of N.B.C. Bell Telephone Hour Be Deleted," included with letter to Wasserman Productions, Inc., N.B.C., Inc., and Bell Telephone Company (August 16, 1967).

[21]Ibid.

of the French language:

> Like the Louisiana Acadian, the Canadian Acadian has tended to regard his language as a family language. This attitude was not particularly important prior to the spread of industrial and electronic mass culture. So long as life was simple and rural the Acadian was able to preserve his language. But without the recognition of French in commercial practices and on the airwaves, family French is doomed to extinction.[22]

Other observers, besides Rodgers, have also blamed the mass-media. Vincent Prince states that "le phénomène de l'urbanization joue là, comme ailleurs, en faveur de l'anglicisation. Perdus dans les grandes villes les Acadiens sont noyés dans la masse anglo-saxone et yankee."[23] And Léo Sauvage says:

> C'est qu'en Louisiane comme partout, et en Nouvelle-Acadie seulement un peu plus lentement qu'ailleurs, la Seconde Guerre mondiale a brisé l'esprit de clocher, relâché les attaches familiales....Deux stations de télevision, a Lafayette, passent quelques programmes en francais, mais ces programmes, à cause de leur contenu, ne sont suivit que par les vieux.[24]

Although the French language has faced prejudice in Louisiana, one can cite the fact that French is still an official language and one can argue that its survival is in the domestic and international interest of the United States. Rodgers points out that "As North America moves toward a Common Market, which is

---

[22]Rodgers, "Is French Dying in State?", Lafayette Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (October 19,1966), pp. 1 and 8.

[23]Prince, "Les Acadiens".

[24]Leo Sauvage, "Avec les 'Cajuns' de la Louisiane," Paris: Le Figaro (October 18, 1967), p. 5.

happening now, the U.S. is going to have to make an adjustment to French and Spanish as official languages in certain regions. The process could be started here."[25] It is not the purpose of this paper to discuss local rights against the central government or vice-versa. What benefits Acadiana and Louisiana can benefit the whole country. On the domestic scene, for the people of Acadiana, employment opportunities could be increased. A flourishing French heritage could attract tourists and students. James Domengeaux said that "State agencies must become deeply involved in order to preserve the Acadian heritage and develop its tourist potential."[26] Vincent Prince suggested to Quebecois that they take their vacation in Louisiana instead of Florida.[27] "Les Québecois affluent depuis longtemps vers la Floride mais négligent la Louisiane, qui n'est pas plus éloignée et gui jouit d'un climat à peu près identique. Une telle apathie a sans doute son origine dans l'ignorance de l'histoire et dans la publicité inadéquate en provenance de cet Etat."[28]

Tourists and exchange students from French-speaking parts of the world like to find another French environment in North

---

[25]Rodgers, "Is French Dying".

[26]The Morning Advocate, "Campanella Heads Fairs Association", Baton Rouge, Louisiana (February 12, 1968), p. 14-B.

[27]Vincent Prince, "La Bouvelle-Orléans," Montréal: La Presse (February 19, 1966), p. 21.

[28]Vincent Prince, "Les Acadiens".

America, as did two students from Montreal University on a recent visit.[29] But others also "like to see something 'different' when they leave home. The emphasis on the French culture in restaurants, hotels with entertainment, menus, signs, names in French would attract these tourists and create a greater economy."[30]

And once Acadiana is known for having a live French heritage, job opportunities would spring up: corporations and governmental agencies operate in the French-speaking world; the armed forces use interpreters. The range is wide: from executives in the Common Market to skilled labor in underdeveloped countries.[31] Philip F. Dur, professor of Political Science at U.S.L., with eighteen years experience in the U.S. foreign service has noted that "an international education act has been passed, but not funded, that encourages instruction in foreign languages."[32] He also talked about "a big drawback the U.S. has had in the conduct of her foreign affairs and that has been the inability of

---

[29]Joan Treadway, "Student Invasion Expected Locally," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (January 17, 1968), p. 2.

[30]Rodgers, "How to Boost Employment for Southwest Louisiana," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Sunday Advertiser (December 18, 1966), p. 4.

[31]Ibid.

[32]Philip F. Dur, as quoted by Bob Angers, Jr., "Anecdotes" (February 19, 1967), p. 6.

so many representatives to speak the language of the countries where they are stationed."[33] Because of the United States' new policy to preserve special language abilities, Texas and California have started programs of teaching in Spanish the children of Mexican-American descent. As Philip Dur also pointed out, "The reason for this is simple: America, with her vast international commitments, needs a large pool of potential diplomatic aides and military personnel with foreign language abilities."[34]

It is said by educators that truly cultured people speak at least one language other than their native one. French is for "...those who wish to broaden their cultural and entertainment lives; whether this means Moliere or Montant, Barrault or Bardot. Finally, outside of Louisiana, there are well-paying jobs for French teachers."[35]

***

We have noted that the French language has declined. We discussed the causes of its decline and found that the language is not yet dead and that it should be kept alive. Let us now see various means by which it could survive in the in the contemporary

---

[33] Ibid.

[34] Rodgers, "Is French Dying".

[35] Ibid.

world.

A few leaders have tried in the past to preserve the French heritage of Acadiana. Bob Angers reports, in an interview, that Thomas D. Arceneaux has mentioned the various achievements of France-Amerique de la Louisiane Acadienne: a few bilingual signs of welcome in French; a few streets and business building signs in French; speeches by important statesmen from France and Canada at the U.S.L. French House; travels to France and Canada by himself and other representatives such as Jerome Domengeaux; associations with various organizations [of struggling minorities in situations similar to that of Acadiana]; Peace Corps recruiting campaigns for French speaking persons.[36] (In fact, a Peace Corps center just recently opened in Baker, Louisiana, a satellite of Baton Rouge. The P. C. officials chose this area first for its unique French speaking abilities and then for its knowledge of tropical agriculture). But waving flags and making speeches will not alone revitalize a language. It takes more tangible proposals and actions than have usually been taken.

In October of 1966, Rodgers wrote an article which contained a resume of many steps which could be taken towards the preservation of the French heritage.[37] From this list, I shall note what has subsequently been done.

---

[36]Thomas D. Arceneaux, as quoted by Bob Angers, Jr., "Anecdotes" (February 24, 1967), p. 3.

[37]See the list of proposals in Appendix B.

Rodgers and others have suggested that a cultural agreement with the province of Quebec should be signed. G. L. Jaray made that suggestion in 1937 (along with additional measures such as French education).[38] In 1967, on May 31, the Louisiana Legislature passed a unanimous resolution endorsing closer ties with French Canada.[39] The text of a cultural entente was negotiated September 7, 1967.[40] In an article, Rodgers has outlined the technicalities necessary to process such an agreement.[41] Accordingly, after acceptance by the Governor of Louisiana, the text was introduced in Congress in February, 1968.[42]

If adopted, this agreement would facilitate co-operation between institutions and agencies of both States. This has already met with some interest, since "Five Louisiana colleges--McNeese, Nicholls, U.S.L., and L.S.U. at Eunice and Baton Rouge--plus other state agencies and institutions are in contact with

---

[38] Jaray, "Le destin", p. 158.

[39] The Morning Advocate, "Legislature Is for Friendship with Canadians," Baton Rouge, Louisiana (June 4, 1967), p. 18.

[40] The Daily Advertiser, "Dr. Rodgers Appointed Liaison Head," Lafayette, Louisiana (April 2, 1967), p. 2.

[41] Rodgers, "The Capacity of Louisiana to Conclude International Agreements and Current Developments," Baton Rouge, Louisiana: The Proceedings of the Academy of Sciences, vol. xxx, no. 1 (1967).

[42] The State of La. and the Government of Quebec, "Cultural Agreement Between Louisiana and Quebec," House Joint Resolution 1537, U.S. Congress (February, 1968).

French Canada in response to a legislative call for closer relationships..."[43] The Ministries of Cultural Affairs and of Education of Quebec gave a subvention of $3,000 each to a group of U.S.L. and L.S.U. students for Summer school at Laval University of Quebec City, in 1967.[44]

This brings us into the wide field of education. As suggested before "there is no reason why it [Acadiana] should not be literate in two languages."[45] James Domengeaux and others have advocated the teaching of French very early in elementary schools. "The schools are, of course, our biggest hope....French should be available from grade one onwards throughout Louisiana. In Acadiana, however, French should be scheduled into the regular curriculum as a matter of course....for at least half an hour per day."[46]

In order to start this, a N.D.E.A. French Institute for

---

[43] Morning Advocate, "Five La. Colleges Cooperate with French Canada," Baton Rouge, Louisiana (November 27, 1967), p. 9-B.

[44] La Presse, "$6,000 à des Louisianais," Montreal (August 24, 1967), p. 8. Two students were given additional funds to extend their stay in Quebec as reported by Joan Treadway, "Canada Welcomes Two from Acadia," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Sunday Advertiser (September 10, 1967), p. 17.

[45] Rodgers, "Is French Dying".

[46] Domengeaux, "Speech".

the training of teachers will be conducted at U.S.L. in the summer of 1968.[47] It will have, to begin, forty-five participants.

Following Domengeaux's appeal, twenty-two Acadiana legislators signed a request dated February 17, 1968, calling upon State officials to implement a plan of action. The Governor offered his support for such a project.[48] In the same context, representatives of French Canadian publishing companies were invited to demonstrate the materials already available and geared to North American students with a background of oral French.[49] Rol and Sasseville of Iditions LIDEC said at the time:

> The situation in Southwest Louisiana resembles that of the western provinces of Canada. In order to preserve a language and a culture, something concrete must be done. I think the area legislators, here today, have the right idea by attempting to establish French education from the first grade of grammar school. Tradition alone, past history and reminiscences will not achieve the purpose.[50]

And Frederick G. Hayes, representative elect of Lafayette Parish,

---

[47] The Daily Advertiser, "French Institute Planned at U.S.L.," Lafayette, Louisiana (December 24, 1967), p. 12. It was organized because of the widespread interest in revitalizing the linguistic and cultural heritage of Southwest Louisiana. Virginia Koening, professor at U.S.L. is in charge.

[48] The Daily Advertiser, "Savez-vous?", Lafayette, Louisiana (April 1, 1968), p. 1.

[49] The Daily Advertiser, "Governor Urged to Back French," Lafayette, Louisiana (February 17, 1968), p. 1.

[50] Roland Sasseville, interview on tape by Finette Baillargeon, KRVS-FM radio station, Lafayette, Louisiana (February 17, 1968).

added strongly: "I have not met one person that was not in favor of this proposal [compulsory French education].[51] This proposal is of course a step in the right direction. But the attitude of the French teachers, especially in college, must undergo changes. They should aim at "standard" French, not "Parisian" French. Good French grammar and vocabulary is all that is needed; regional accents and idioms are as acceptable in French just as they are in the English-speaking world.

The two students, mentioned before, from Montreal University, who visited Louisiana between semesters, deplored the lack of visible signs of this living heritage and were sorry Cajuns were reluctant to speak French with them.[52] They did not know that a group determined to change the situation had been formed in the Spring of 1967.[53]

The French Heritage Committee of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce has the theme "Look French --Speak French." In this vein, the "Lafayette Music Company has recently changed the name on the front of its building to conform with the Chamber of Commerce's request that the city merchants take steps to preserve our French

---

[51]Frederick G. Hayes, interview by G. B..

[52]Bernard Lapointe and Gaston Menard, as reported by Joan Treadway, "Student Invasion".

[53]The Daily Advertiser, "French Group Organized," Lafayette, Louisiana (March 3, 1967), p. 6. This committee was first proposed by Rodgers, who also supplied an organizational program dated February 12, 1967.

culture here in Lafayette."[54]

District Attorney Bertrand Deblanc also took an interest and wrote to Advertiser colomnist Bob Angers, Jr. on the preservation of historic grounds and buildings in St. Martinville.[55] Steps are being taken to preserve and restore old historical houses in the area: the first one being the Vermilionville Inn on the Evangeline Thruway; Dave Perkins, architect, announced a drive to give a French flavor to downtown Lafayette; land may also be available for an Acadian Fair, with monuments, exibits of arts and crafts; some area companies, such as Elk Concrete Products, have printed calendars and brochures in French; and discussion groups are being organized for the development of St. Martinville and Washington, Louisiana, as tourist attractions.[56]

Lafayette now has a sister-city: Longeuil, Quebec;[57] William Conrad has asked and received assistance in a U.S.L. Colonial Records Project from Canadian Archives;[58] Bob Angers, Jr.

---

[54]Trent Angers, "'Maison de Musique' Aids French Culture," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (February 20, 1967), p. 28.

[55]Angers, Jr., "Anecdotes," (March 3, 1967), p. 3.

[56]Angers, Jr., "Major Move Underway to Preserve Historical Buildings," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Sunday Advertiser (October 12, 1967), p. 11.

[57]Angers, Jr., "'Jumelage' Slated for Two Cities," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (September 14, 1967), p. 2.

[58]The Daily Advertiser, "Colonial Records Project Traces Louisiana History," Lafayette, Louisiana (August 20, 1967), p. 15.

proposed a Trading Center in Lafayette and as a first step a Canadian Trade Mission may come here in September, 1968.[59]

So the interest has spread and ranges from the Governor and politicians to the ordinary citizen. A meeting, organized by Audrey Babineaux, grouped together a suprisingly large group of educators.[60] But, there is still much more to be done, before the hope dies and with it its heritage.

Almost untouched, apart from suggestions, has been the aspect of broadcasting. Rodgers deplores this lack when he writes:

> The area most crucial for the survival of a language in the contemporary world is that of broadcasting. Here and there in Acadiana broadcasting stations --radio and T.V. --offer a smattering of French programming. These brief programs are devoted to country music, religion and farm news. They are offered at inconvenient hours and, since, they are frequently translated at sight from English materials, they turn out to be "Frenglish". A full-time French-language broadcast station, perhaps a non-profit "educational" station, would be the most important single project to encourage the survival of French in Acadiana.[61]

Research revealed that Vincent Prince had made similar observations the year before, following his return from Acadiana.

---

[59]Angers, "Lafayette As a French, Spanish Trading Center," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (July 7, 1967), p. 2.

[60]The Sunday Advertiser, "Bilingual Meet Airs 'Natural Resources'," Lafayette, Louisiana (January 21, 1968), p. 10.

[61]Rodgers, "Political Economy", p. 8.

He wrote:

> Ainsi, par exemple, certains postes de télévision louisianais offrent, chaque jour, de courts programmes d'une demi-heure en français. Des documentaires, des films sur le Québec ou autres types de films français seraient évidement les bienvenus pour meubler ces programmes.
>
> Les disques pourraient aussi, semble-t-il, devenir un précieux objet d'échanges. La chanson française, le folklore et peut-être certains de nos programmes télévisés contribueraient à populariser la culture et le fait français chez nos cousins du Sud.[62]

Both Rodgers and Prince agree that with effort time and interest, this lack could be fulfilled at reasonable cost, since

> The mass-media in the area make no attempt to secure records and broadcast tapes from French Canada. Presumably as "used materials", these would be very inexpensive and would come cheaper than many American materials and hook-ups, which are sold on a concurrent usage basis. Amongst the many Quebec radio stations, CKVL Verdun, broadcasts on a bilingual basis throughout the day and tapes its output. Insofar as unilingual programs are concerned, most Quebec stations and Radio-Canada (B.B.C.) broadcast in French and a plethora of audio and video tapes would be available to any interested Louisiana company.[63]

Three observers have thus mentioned the impact of anglophone electronic media as a negative factor. Paradoxically, the very mean of destruction could be the means of reconstruction! An excellent example has been French Canada's Radio-Canada (C.B.C.) which in the mass-media world has served as a basis for the survival of the French language in Canada. The phenomenum has has been observed not only in Quebec but also in New Brunswick,

---

[62]Prince, "Les Acadiens".

[63]Rodgers, "Political Economy," footnote Appendix, p. 3.

as J. E. Belliveau (public relations agent of Louis Robichaud, premier of the government of New Brunswick) points out: "One's impression is that, in New Brunswick, the culture is not dying, though in some ways it is meeting a hard challenge because of the electronic media. But there is now a French-language public (C.B.C.) television outlet in Moncton, a French daily newspaper, L'Evangeline."[64] The whole article shows the determination in that province to preserve the French heritage. This quotation is the only admission of a battle. It is being won because of the help of the French network.

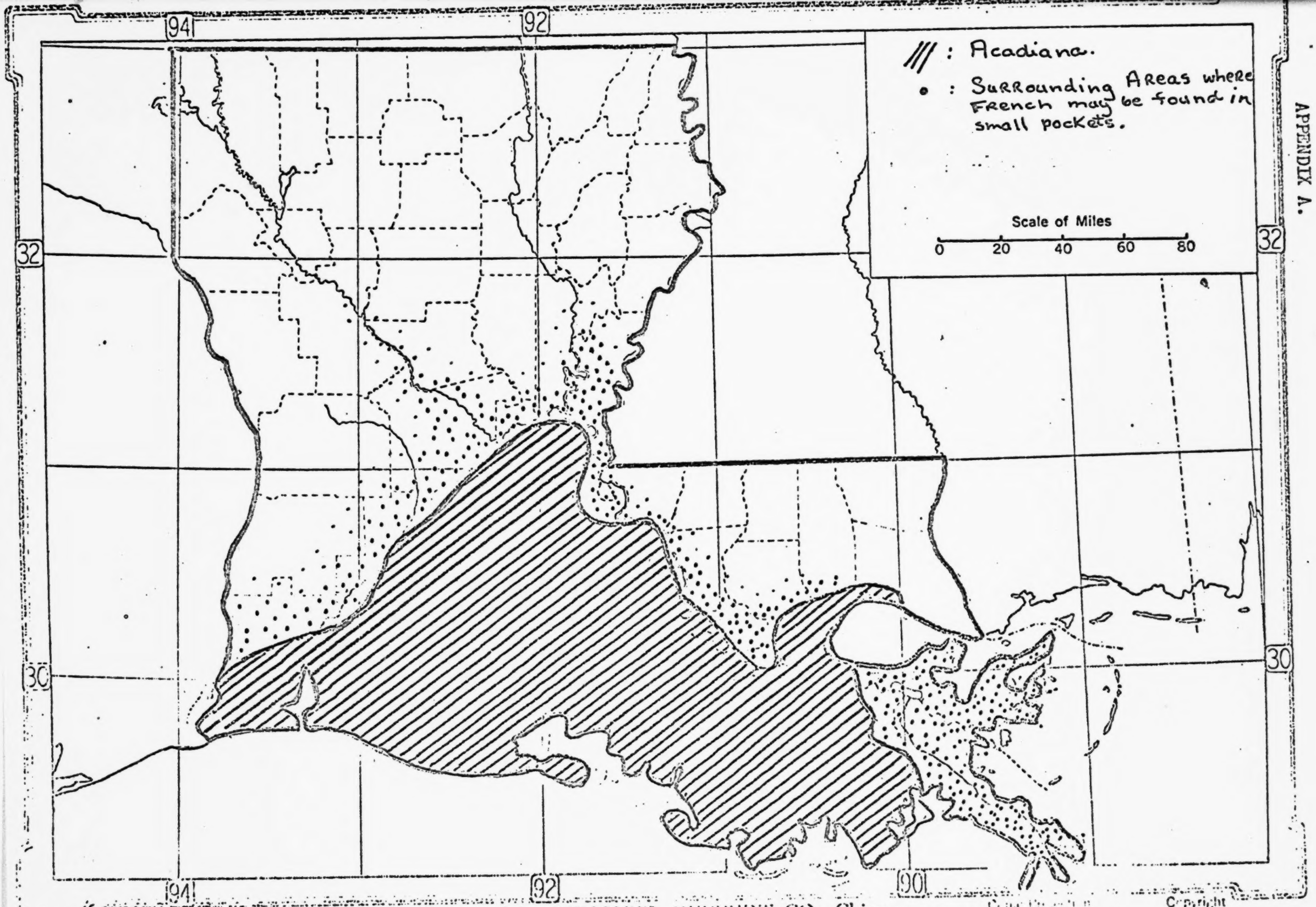
Cultural homogeneity is growing in many countries, and broadcasting is its most devastating tool. For example, in Italy "The nationwide impact of television is relentlessly nibbling away at Italian regionalism, making Italians in the south more like Italians in the north..."[65]

The 400,000 Acadians cannot continue speaking their language daily without the help of francophone broadcasting. The Acadians have spoken a family-French and it is in their homes that this language must be preserved. The long-range processes of education and external contacts will then have a strong foundation.

---

[64]J. E. Belliveau, "French Thrives in Canada," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (October 20, 1966), p. 5.

[65]Time, "Italy," vol. XDI, no. 13, Chicago, Times Inc. (March 29, 1968), p. 33.



Printed in U.S.A.
Published by DENOYER-GEPPERT CO., Chicago
Copyright

APPENDIX B

The list below was taken from Raymond S. Rodgers, "Political Economy of the Survival of French in Louisiana," paper read to the Louisiana Academy of Sciences (April, 1967), p. 15-17. The paper was also published in French, in Montreal: Le Devoir (February 24, 1968), p. 20, under the title "La situation actuelle du francais en Louisiane."

***

To summarize and expand some of the points made in this paper, the following is a brief program of action which could and should be undertaken to ensure the survival of Acadiana.

1. The State of Louisiana could enter into a cultural agreement with Quebec and the Acadian province of New Brunswick. Congress has evolved a doctrine of tacit consent with respect to Article I, Section 10, Clause 3 of the Constitution permitting such agreements.

2. The state could allow public education institutions to offer instruction in French in courses other than French itself. The formula determining the amount of instruction offered in the French language could be geared to the composition of the local population and to demand for such instruction.

3. Area institutions of education and technical and vocational training could attract students from all French-speaking

parts of the world, with financing to come from already existing foundation and government grant programs.

4. Municipalities and other local authorities could also exert influence within their terms of reference. For example, subdivisions and streets could be given bilingual signs and reflect French in their names.

5. Area schools and cultural groups could make direct contact with their Canadian counterparts with a view to exchanges of personnel, visits, etc. So long as public agencies act within their terms of reference, there is nothing in the U. S. or Louisiana constitutions preventing this.

6. The churches - particularly the Roman Catholic - could extend the use of French in their schools and catechism instruction, Mass could be offered in French, as it is in Canada, wherever the population would appreciate this service.

7. Teachers of French could settle for a good standard of language comprehension and stop emphasizing a "Parisian" French which is only spoken by intellectuals even in France. They could look into the use of Canadian texts which presume an existing acquaintance with the elements of the spoken language.

8. The legislature could establish historic districts and require or encourage architecture and advertising therein to conform to a consistent style.

9. Canada-Louisiana, and Canada-France foundations could be established to further cooperative programs reflecting not only

the past but also the vibrant, popular culture of the present. Local movie houses could bring in more French films with English subtitles.

10. Businesses in the area could recognize the tourist potential which lies in the use of bilingual signs and materials. Restaurant menus, motel names, advertising signs, could whenever possible be geared to a bilingual or French flavor.

11. Bell Telephone could ensure that all its operators are bilingual; it could use French cross-references in its directories, as it does in Canada.

12. Companies like Sears, which are already adapted to the French market in Canada, could encourage their sales personnel to acquire the correct terminology for their products and use French whenever the customer wants.

13. Area mass media could inquire about low-cost records, tapes, and short-wave rebroadcasts from the French Network of the CBC and other Canadian companies. Newspapers and magazines could experiment with a French-language comic strip (all the North American favorites are translated for Canada) and a daily column giving lessons on how to read French.

14. Area financial resources could be marshalled to give the USL Maison Acadienne a full-time resident director who speaks, reads and writes fluent French.

15. The Quebec Ministry of Cultural Affairs is the main point contact insofar as Canadian cooperation may be forth coming.

Cultural organizations could establish liaison with this agency.

APPENDIX C

EXTRACT FROM LAFAYETTE ADVERTISER

MAY 7, 1968

FRENCH TELEVISION STATION PUSHED FOR ACADIANA

Area legislators will introduce a bill in the state legislature next week urging the establishment of a French television station to serve South Louisiana.

Rep. Fred Hayes, Lafayette, will coordinate the bill in the House.

The bill asks for $180,000 in state funds for "Television--Louisianne," a station which would derive its material from Radio-Canada, the National Film Board of Canada, and Radio-Quebec, among other sources. Among those spearheading the movement are James Domengeaux and Allen Babineaux, local lawyers, and Dr. Raymond Rogers of USL. Funds would be derived from the general fund of the state.

The station would be a non-profit organization.

The bill specifies that the station shall be directed and managed by a board of ten members appointed by the governor. It suggests educational broadcasts during the day, and commercially-sponsored broadcasts during the evening. The station, says the bill, may enter into contractural arrangements with the Educational Television Network or other networks in the United States.

According to the bill, Televisión-Louisianne will be subject to the laws of Louisiana pertaining to fiscal management.

APPENDIX D

CIRCULAR distributed 16 May 1968
by Prof. Raymond S. Rodgers,
Aide-de-Camp, Governor's Staff;
Chairman, Committee on International Accords, LTDC. | Lafayette

(Re H. J. Res. 1097
entered in Congress
15 February 1968)

1. Following statement was made by Governor McKeithen late 15 May 1968 in a filmed interview with Radiodiffusion francaise:

> "I am 100% in favor of steps to preserve Louisiana's French language and heritage. French instruction can and must start in the first grade in our schools. I believe we must move aggresively now to accomplish this. The language is one of our greatest assets. With it we can help to explain the United States viewpoint of world affairs to our French speaking friends throughout the world.
> For decades we have given translators to the Armed Services. With the right educational programs we can expand this contribution to include international trade and other jobs overseas. I call upon schoolboards to plan for increased French instruction in our schools.
>
> We also need to encourage closer relations between Louisiana and the French-speaking people of Canada, for the cultural enrichment of North America.
>
> In the near future I intend to appoint a Commission of distinguished citizens, with the duty of fostering the program of language and heritage preservation. In addition, I welcome any legislative measures designed to assist in the preservation, strengthening, and utilization of the French language and heritage of the Americas in our state."

Note: A press release based on the foregoing is being issued by the Governor's Office, Baton Rouge.

2. Following extract is taken from the New York Times of 5 May 1968 (byline Ottawa) at page 21:

> "Officials in Ottawa this week pointed out that...Quebec and Louisiana are planning cultural and educational cooperation under an arrangement acceptable to the Governments in Ottawa and Washington."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

Groulx, Lionel A. L'histoire acadienne. Montréal: Société St. Jean-Baptiste, 1937.

LeBlanc, Dudley J. The Acadian Miracle. Lafayette, Louisiana: Evangeline Publishing Co., 1966.

LeBlanc, Dudley J. The True Story of the Acadians. Lafayette, Louisiana: Evangeline Publishing Co., 1932.

Voorhies, Felix Acadian Reminiscences. New Orleans: E. P. Rivas, c1907.

Winzerling, Oscar W. Acadian Odyssey. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1955.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Angers, Bob Jr. "Anecdotes and Antidotes," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (February 19, 1967), p. 6.

_____. "Anecdotes and Antidotes," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (February 24, 1967) p. 3.

_____. "Anecdotes and Antidotes," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (March 3, 1967), p. 6.

_____. "Lafayette as a French, Spanish Trading Center," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (July 7, 1967), p. 2.

_____. "'Jumelage' Slated for Two Cities," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (September 14, 1967), p. 2.

Angers, Trent "'Maison de Musique' Aids French Culture," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (February 20, 1967), p. 28.

Belliveau, J. E. "French Thrives in Canada," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (October 20, 1966) p. 5.

The Daily Advertiser. "French Institute Planned at USL," Lafayette, Louisiana (December 24, 1967), p. 12.

_____. "French Group Organized," Lafayette, Louisiana (March 3, 1967), p. 6.

_____. "Dr. Rodgers Appointed Liaison Head," Lafayette, Louisiana (April 2, 1967), p. 2.

_____. "Colonial Records Project Traces Louisiana History," Lafayette, Louisiana (August 20, 1967), p. 15.

_____. "Governor Urged to Back French," Lafayette, Louisiana (February 17, 1968), p. 1.

The Daily World. "U.S.L. Teacher Heads Liaison Unit with Quebec," Opelousas, Louisiana (April 2, 1967), p. 20.

Dubois, Hilda Kilmer "Cajun Title Is Growing in Stature, Understanding," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Sunday Advertiser (February 11, 1968), p. 12.

_____ "Acadian People Are Phenomenal Group," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Sunday Advertiser (February 18, 1968), p. 21.

The Morning Advocate. "Five La. Colleges Cooperate with French Canada," Baton Rouge (November 27, 1967), p. 9-B.

_____. "Legislature Is for Friendship with Canadians," Baton Rouge (June 4, 1967), p. 18.

_____. "Campanella Heads Fairs Association," Baton Rouge, Louisiana (February 12, 1968), p. 14-B.

La Presse. "$3,000 à des Louisianais," Montréal (August 24, 1967), p. 8.

Prince, Vincent "Les Acadiens en Louisiane," Montréal: La Presse (February 14, 1966), p. 7.

_____ "La Nouvelle-Orléans," Montréal: La Presse (February 19, 1966), p. 21.

Rodgers, Raymond S. "Canadians Find Louisiana Disappointing," University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette: The Vermilion (October 2, 1966), p. 9.

_____ "Is French Dying in State?", Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (October 19, 1966), pp. 1 and 8.

_____ "Professor Proposes Steps On Preserving La. French," University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette: The Vermilion (October 28, 1966), p. 9.

_____ "How to Boost Employment for Southwest Louisiana," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Sunday Advertiser (December 18, 1966), p. 4.

_____ "Community Action Needed to Preserve French in Area," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (October 23, 1966), p. 21.

_____ "The Legal Status of the French Language in Louisiana," Eunice, Louisiana: The Eunice News (December 5, 1967), p. 5.

_____ "La situation actuelle du français en Louisiane," Montreal: Le Devoir (February 24, 1968), p. 20.

Sauvage, Leo "Avec les 'Cajuns' de la Louisiane," Paris: Le Figaro (October 18, 1967), p. 5.

The Sunday Advertiser. "Bilingual Meet Airs 'Natural Resources'," Lafayette, Louisiana (January 21, 1968), p. 10.

Treadway, Joan "Canada Welcomes Two from Acadia," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Sunday Advertiser (September 10, 1967) p. 17.

_____ "Student Invasion Expected Locally," Lafayette, Louisiana: The Daily Advertiser (January 17, 1968), p. 2.

MISCELLANEOUS

Domengeaux, James "Speech to the Louisiana Association of Fairs and Festivals," Baton Rouge (February 10, 1968).

Hayes, Frederick G. interview on tape by Finette Baillargeon, Lafayette, Louisiana: KRVS-FM radio station (February 17, 1968).

Jaray, Gabriel-Louis "Le destin francais en Louisiane," Paris: Siège social, detached from France-Amérique (August, 1937), pp. 153-158.

Patenaude, Leon J. Z. ,"Rapport du secrétaire administratif de SECMS de la délegation des éditeurs de manuels scolaries en Louisiane, U.S.A. du 15 au 18 février, 1968," Montréal (February 19, 1968).

Rodgers, Raymond S. "The Capacity of Louisiana to Conclude International Agreements and Recent Developments," Baton Rouge: The Proceedings of the Academy of Sciences, vol. XXX, no. 1, (Spring, 1967).

_____. "Political Economy of the Survival of French in Louisiana," paper read to the Louisiana Academy of Sciences (April, 1967).

Sasseville, Roland interview on tape by Finette Ballairgeon, Lafayette, Louisiana: KRVS-FM radio station (February 17, 1968).

The State of Louisiana and The Government of Quebec "Cultural Agreement Between Louisiana and Quebec," House Joint Resolution 1537, U.S. Congress (February, 1968).

Tate, Paul C. "Memorandum in Support of Demand that Louisiana Portion of N.B.C. Bell Telephone Hour Special Be Deleted," accompanying letter to Wasserman Productions, Inc., National Broadcasting Corporation, Inc., and The Bell Telephone Company (August 16, 1967).

Time magazine "Italy," Chicago: Time Inc., vol. XDI, no. 13 (March 29, 1968).